

# ILLUSTRATED SUPPLEMENT

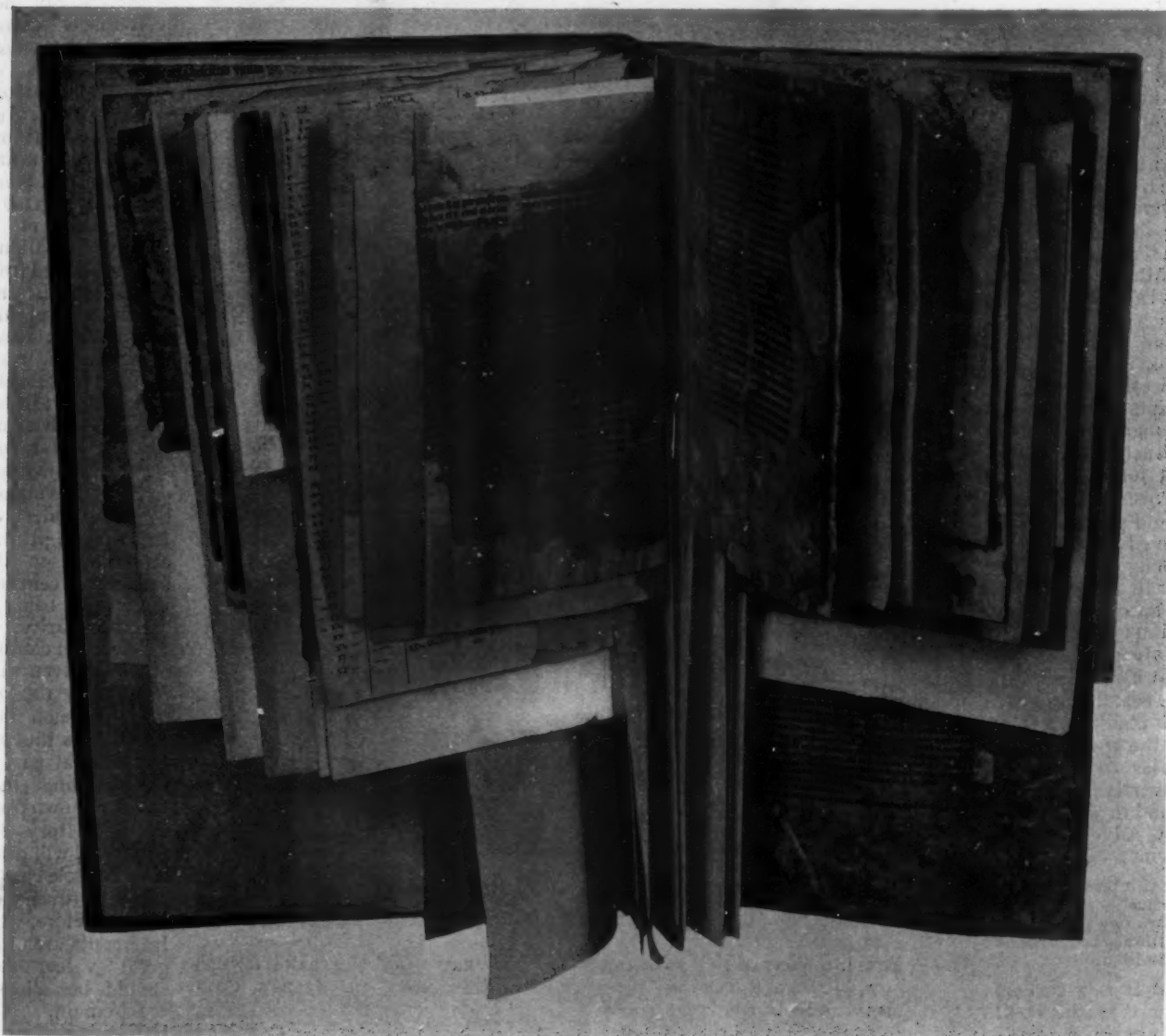
NOVEMBER 4, 1905

## OLD BINDINGS AS LITERARY HUNTING-GROUNDS

It must have occurred to most persons who have examined old bindings that their producers cared less for appearances than for utility; a binding had to be strong, it need not be beautiful. And this indifference to mere appearance is very striking in the use of fragments of manuscripts and printed books as fly-leaves and linings for the

the discarded books of scholars. At the Reformation, moreover, the Oxford binders must have reaped an unusually rich harvest among the manuscripts cast out by the Commissioners of Edward VI. Bale tells us that:

"Of those Lybrarye Bokes . . . some they sold to the Grossers and sope sellers, and some they sent over see to the Bokebynders,



I.—AN OLD SPANISH BOOK, BOUGHT BY THE LATE SIR JOHN STAINER, AT SEVILLE. THE BOARDS WERE COMPOSED OF EIGHT LEAVES OF AN "OFFICIUM PRO FESTO VISITATIONIS B.V.M." AND OTHER WORKS

boards of bindings. The most desirable material was probably plain parchment, but after the invention of printing the increased production of books rendered it too costly, and a binder would employ any leaves of manuscripts or printed books that might be straying about his shop. The presence of such fragments is very noticeable in English bindings, and especially in those executed at Oxford, where binders would find ample material among

not in small nombre, but at tymes whole Shypps full, to the wonderynge of the foren Nacyons. . . . I knowe a merchaunt man, which shall at thys tyme be namelesse, that bought the contentes of two noble Lybraryes for XL shyllinges pryce, a shame it is to be spoken. Thys stuffe hath he occupied in the stede of gray paper by the space of more than these X yeares, and yet he hath store ynough for as many yeares to come."

This "great spoil of books" may well account for the very large number of leaves from precious manuscripts that are

found lining Oxford bindings produced after the Reformation. An ignorant binder could not be expected to discriminate between the precious and the worthless; the leaves of an illuminated Sarum missal or of a twelfth-century English Chronicle were just as serviceable to him as blank parchment, and doubtless much cheaper. The Sarum missal which provided Joseph Barnes with fly-leaves and linings must have been one of the most magnificent of its kind, and there is probably no Sarum missal in existence that would have surpassed it in beauty. But even Barnes was not such a miscreant as that other Oxford binder who cut to pieces the English Chronicle, for there is good reason to believe that he destroyed much invaluable history. Several leaves, however, have already been rescued from Bodleian books, and there is reasonable hope that others may yet be brought to light in College libraries. Perhaps the most valuable manuscript fragments ever recovered from a binding in the Bodleian are four leaves of an eighth-century Merovingian missal, which were found in an early printed book in the Douce collection. Manuscripts in early Merovingian hands are of such rarity that, but for these four leaves, the Bodleian would possess not a single example among its thirty-three thousand manuscripts.

But it is the printed fragments that usually reward the searcher among old bindings. One of the two known copies of Caxton's Advertisement was found in a binding. The Advertisement begins:

"If it plesse any man  
spirituel or temporel  
to bye any pyes of two  
and thre comemoracions  
of Salisburi vse;"

and it is a curious fact that the book advertised owes its preservation—a very fragmentary one, however—to a binder no less than the Advertisement itself. Caxton's "Donatus," Machlinia's "Horæ ad usum Sarum," the "Textus Alexandri," printed at Oxford about 1485, together with many other fifteenth-century English printed books, are known to us solely from the fragments of them that have been rescued from book-covers. Only a few weeks ago four leaves of that very valuable book, Caxton's "Directorium Sacerdotum," were found as fly-leaves in a book belonging to Christ Church Library.

The early binder put his printed waste to yet another use, for he found that by pasting several leaves together he could obtain a fine flexible board for his covers. When

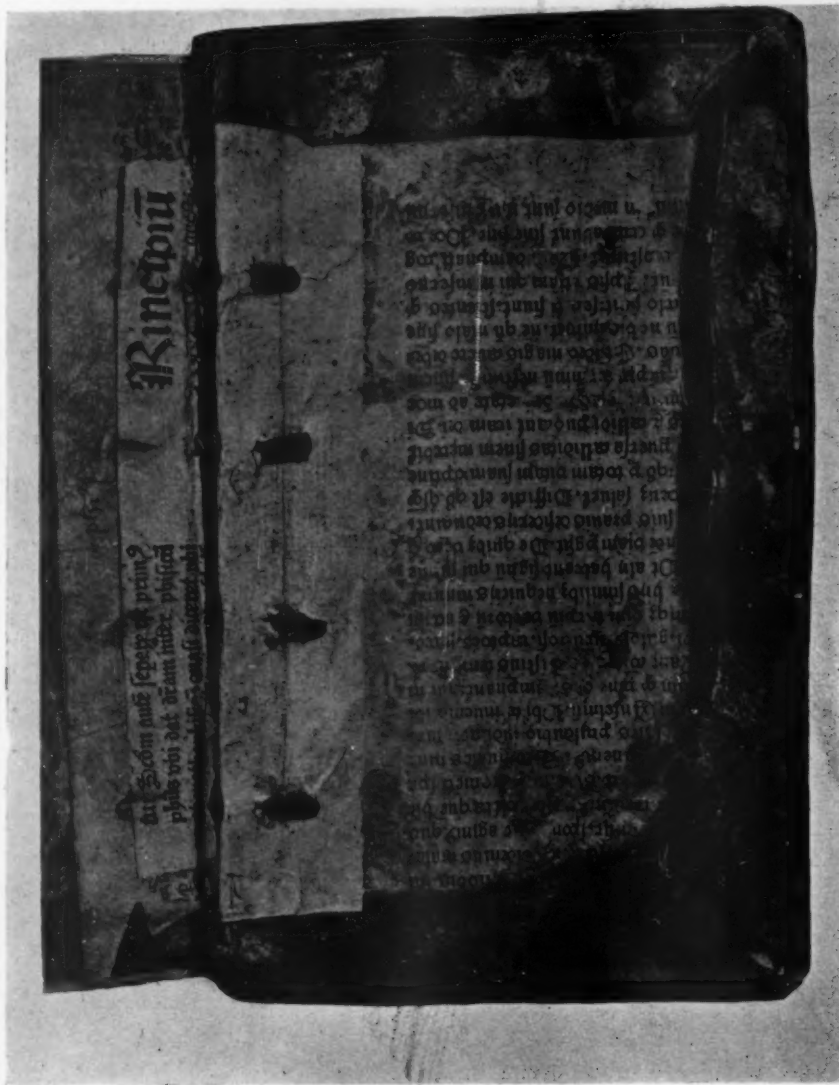
the boards of a binding happen to be composed of printed leaves pasted together in this manner, it is surprising what a single binding will sometimes render. In 1897 the late Sir John Stainer bought at Seyille an old Spanish book, the boards of which were composed of printed fragments. (Fig. 1.) When damped apart they yielded eight leaves of an "Officium pro festo Visitationis B.V.M.," two leaves of a Latin grammar, fragments of an edition of the "Metamorphoses" of Ovid, and two leaves of an edition of the "Hymns of the Breviary"; all these books were printed in Spain in the fifteenth century and were hitherto unknown to bibliographers. There were also sixteen leaves of the "Blason General" of Pedro Gratia Dei, printed at

Coria in 1489, of which only one copy exists. Such an extensive find as this is necessarily not of frequent occurrence, but there must be hundreds of volumes in Oxford alone containing precious printed fragments awaiting identification. Some idea of the general appearance of a "likely" volume can be obtained from the book which forms the subject of the second illustration. It contains fragments of the "Explanaciones in Librum Job" of Richard Rolle of Hampole and the Commentary on the "De Anima" by Alexander de Hales, both printed at Oxford in the fifteenth century, the former being of excessive rarity.

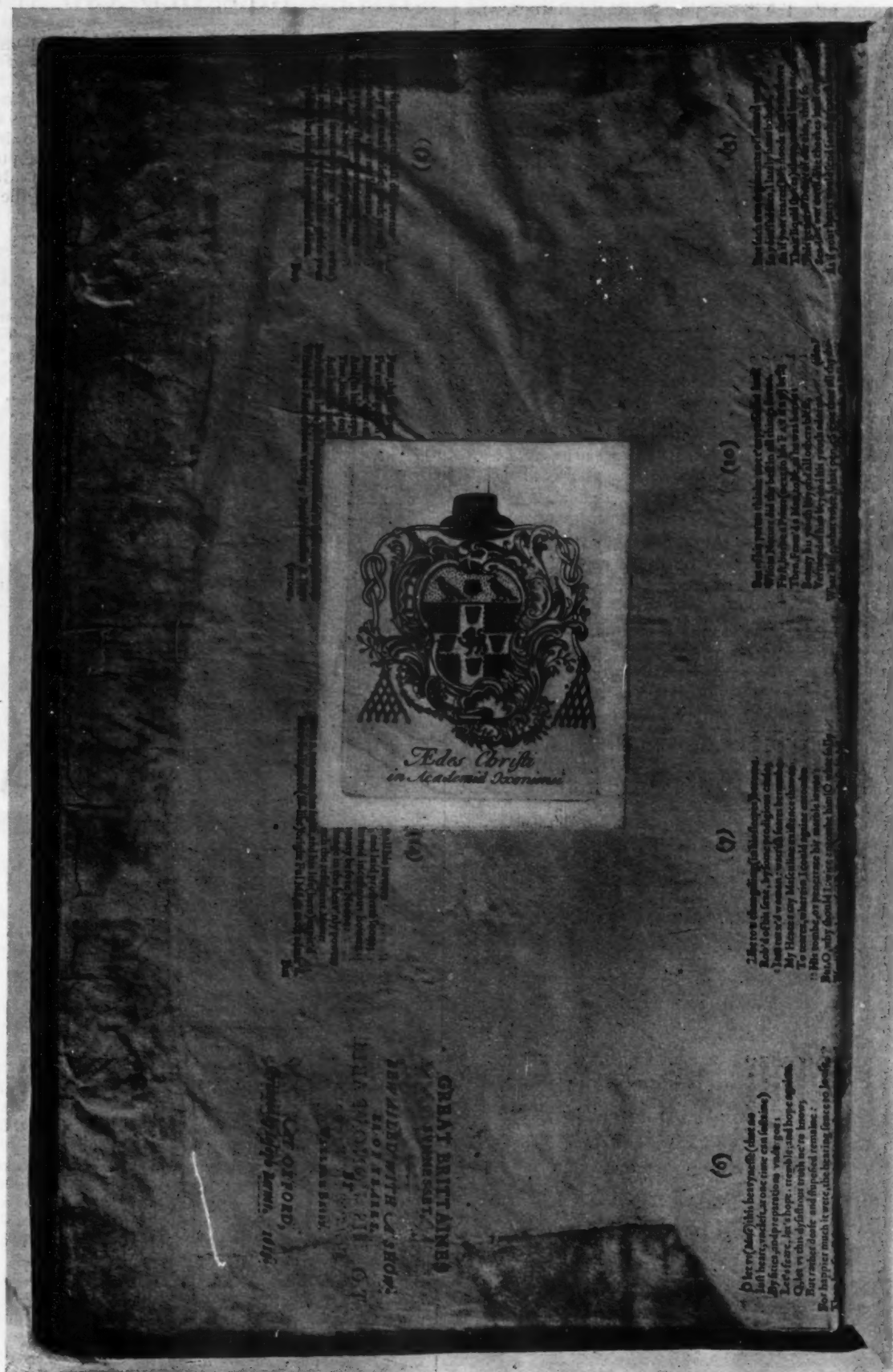
A word of caution may be given with regard to the removal of such fragments. As they are an essential part of the binding they have their own place in the history of a book, and will often give the sole clue to a book's provenance. If, therefore, the fragments are of no great value, they should be allowed to remain. The indiscriminate

removal of fly-leaves and linings is to be strongly deprecated.

Although binders have played an active part in the destruction of books, yet they have at least preserved for us the memory of many; and a certain Oxford binder, Roger Barnes, should be honoured as having handed down to posterity a complete work, namely, "Great Brittaines Synnes-set, bewailed with a shower of teares." The author was William Basse, a very minor poet of the seventeenth century, and his book was printed at Oxford in 1613 in a very minor way; it has but twelve leaves and each page has but a single stanza of eight lines. What happened to this mournful work is not known. Apparently



II.—A BINDING CONTAINING FRAGMENTS OF THE VERY RARE "EXPLANACIONES" OF RICHARD ROLLE OF HAMPOLE, AND ALEXANDER DE HALES'S COMMENTARY ON THE "DE ANIMA"



III.—THE BINDING OF THE "DICTIONARIUM MORALE" OF BERCHORIUS, IN THE LIBRARY OF CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD, CONTAINING MORE THAN HALF OF BASSE'S "GREAT BRITAINES SVNNES-SET"



all the copies that did not drift into Jacobean waste-paper baskets came into the possession of Roger Barnes, who very wisely used them to line his bindings. At the present moment there exists only one perfect copy, which was made up from fragments found in Bodleian books. There are fragments in the British Museum, and at Merton College, while several are still hidden away in bindings in Oxford Libraries. The binding of the "Dictionarium Morale" (Fig. III.) of Petrus Berchorius in Christ Church Library contains more than half of "Great Brittaines Synnes-set," and in this case how much more interesting are the linings of the covers than the book itself! We can almost imagine the seventeenth-century undergraduate, sleepily astray among the 1659 pages of the "Dictionarium Morale," turning to the cover and reading, almost with relief:

"O let vs (*Muse*) this heavynesse (that no  
Iust heart, vnleft, at one time can sustaine)  
By fittes, and preparations vndergoe:  
Let's feare, let's hope: tremble: and hope againe.  
O, let vs this dysastrous truth ne're know;  
But rather deafe and stupefied remaine:  
For happier much it were, the hearing sence to loose,  
Then loose all sence to heare such an vnhappy newes."

We of a later age prefer our bindings devoid of such literary waifs and strays, but minor poets may well complain that they are being robbed of a very sure and delightful way of reaching posterity.

STRICKLAND GIBSON.



IV.—TITLE-PAGE OF "THE CASTELL OF LABOUR,"  
BY WYNKYN DE WORDE

## TITLE-PAGES, OLD AND NEW

A LOVER of old books is apt to look on title-pages with mixed feelings. They are undeniably convenient in the readiness with which (except when the publisher has his own reasons for suppressing it) they give all the information needed as to what the book is about, who has written it, when it was printed and from whom it may be obtained. The title-page, moreover, if author, printer and publisher are all willing to forswear the gentle art of self-advertisement, may possess any degree of beauty from the charm



V.—TITLE-PAGE OF SIR WILLIAM CORNWALLIS'S  
"ESSAYES," DESIGNED BY CECIL

of good lettering skilfully arranged to whatever delights may be won from ornamental borders and trade-marks, or from portraits and pictures. But the convenience and the beauty—or possibility of beauty—have not been bought without a price. The first essential of a good title-page is unity of design, and to this unity much has to be sacrificed. The worst foe to be encountered is the printer who desires to display the rich variety of his types, but little less dangerous is the author, proud of his degrees and of the various societies of which he is a fellow, or anxious to help the sale of his new book by recalling previous successes, or perhaps, conversely, to make the popularity which he expects from his new book help to quicken the sales of old ones. In this last desire the publisher may be supposed to share, though as a rule, poor man, he stands between author and printer, trying to soften the unreasonableness of both, without himself greatly adding to the difficulties. As to the reality of the difficulties any one who has tried to arrange title-pages will be ready to speak very feelingly. It would be too much to say that they all arise from the need of brevity. Sometimes the reverse is the case, and the title refuses to be arranged decoratively until a new phrase has been added to it or longer words substituted for shorter ones. But much more often words

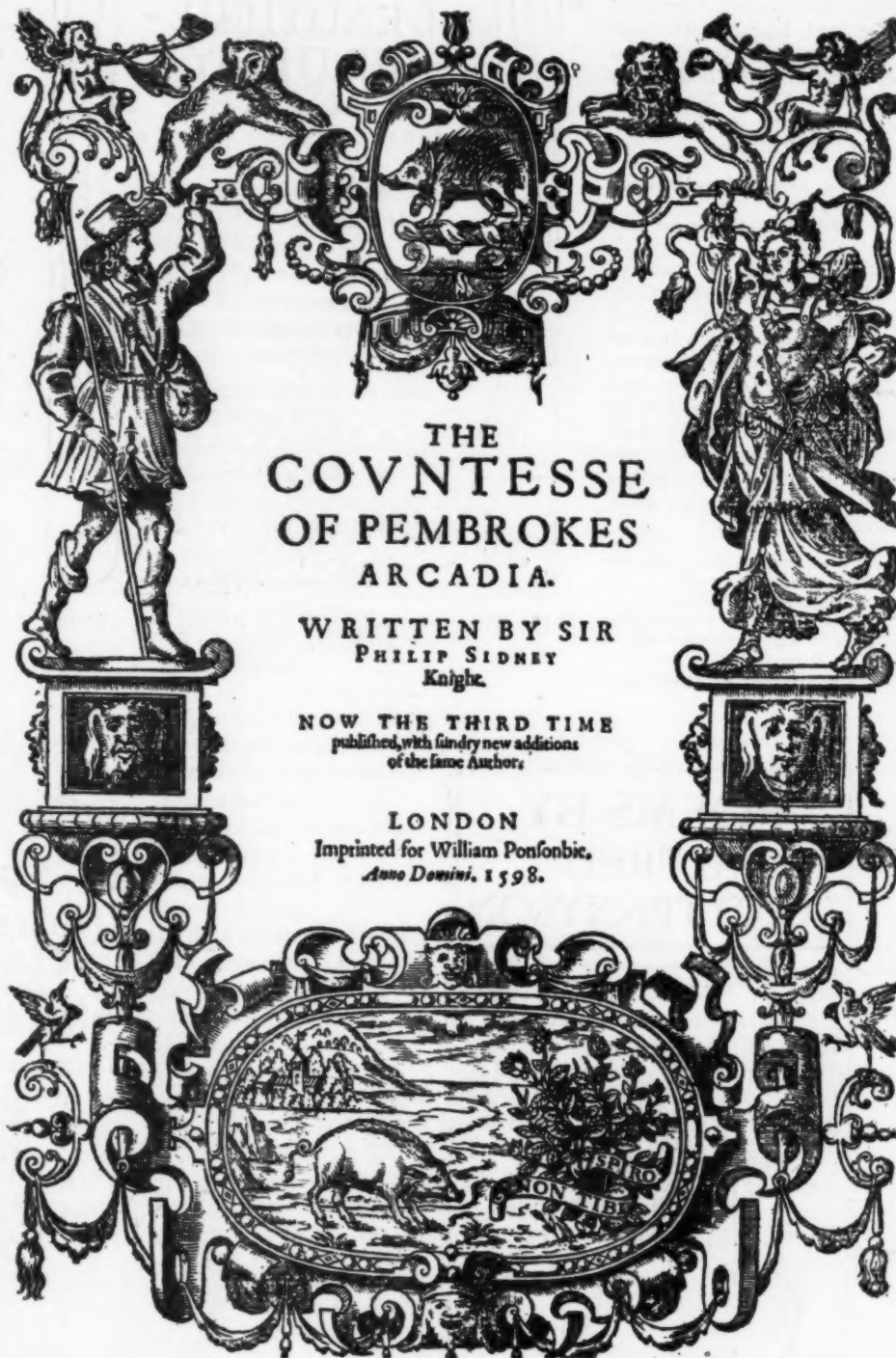


have to be cut out, or an author shorn of some dearly prized initial, or the news has to be broken to a meek—or by no means meek—editor, that he must be content to sign his name to the preface, lest the whole decorative effect of the title-page should be destroyed if another line be added to it. "I can make you comfortable in various ways," says this modern Procrustes, "but the number of beds in the house remains limited, and if you don't fit any of them a turn on the rack to lengthen you out, or the amputation of a toe to bring you down to the next size, is the least you can expect."

Contrast with all this the freedom with which authors, printers and publishers, before title-pages were invented, could express themselves when they came to the end of a book. One or two printers amused themselves by forcing these little epilogues ("colophons" the learned call them, but the word seems to be of modern origin) into particular shapes, but with the aid of the contractions that then played so large a part in the compositor's box this was no great matter, and all the rest was freedom. If author or printer felt thankful and religious, he could praise God that his task was ended; if he was nervous, he could bespeak the sympathy of his readers: if he was proud, he could, and frequently did, boast to his heart's content. The author could tell when he first took up his pen, when he laid it down, and amid what difficulties he had pursued his task, and the printer could sing his own song to what tune he pleased, so long, that is, as he remained his own master. When publishing and printing became two separate occupations, it was naturally the publisher who had his say in these matters.

Much of this information is now conveyed by means of prefaces and publishers' notes, and both prefaces and publishers' notes have their uses. As a fact (save in the case of very sanguine authors), these are nearly always written and printed, as the epilogue or colophon used to be, after the text of the book has been completed, but they demand to be read first, before reader and author have got on familiar terms. What combination of title-page and preface could ever take the place of one of old Caxton's epilogues? Take that, for instance, to his translation of the romance of Charlemagne, certainly not the best he ever penned, but easy to quote because of its brevity:

"And because I, William Caxton, was desired and required by a good and singular friend of mine, Master William Daubeney, one of the treasurers of the jewels of the noble and most Christian King, our natural sovereign lord, late of noble memory, King Edward the fourth, on whose soul Jesu have mercy, to reduce all these said histories into our English tongue, I have put me in devoir to translate this



VI.—TITLE-PAGE OF "THE COVNTESSE OF PEMBROKE'S ARCADIA," THIRD EDITION

said book, as ye heretofore may see, all a-long and plain, praying all them that shall read see or hear it, to pardon me of this simple and rude translation and reducing, beseeching them that shall find fault to correct it, and in so doing they shall deserve thankings and I shall pray God for them, who bring them and me, after this short and transitory life to everlasting bliss. Amen, the which work was finished in the reducing of it into English the 18th day of June, the second year of King Richard the third and the year of our Lord 1485, and first imprinted the first day of December the same year of our Lord, and the first year of King Harry the Seventh. Explicit per William Caxton."

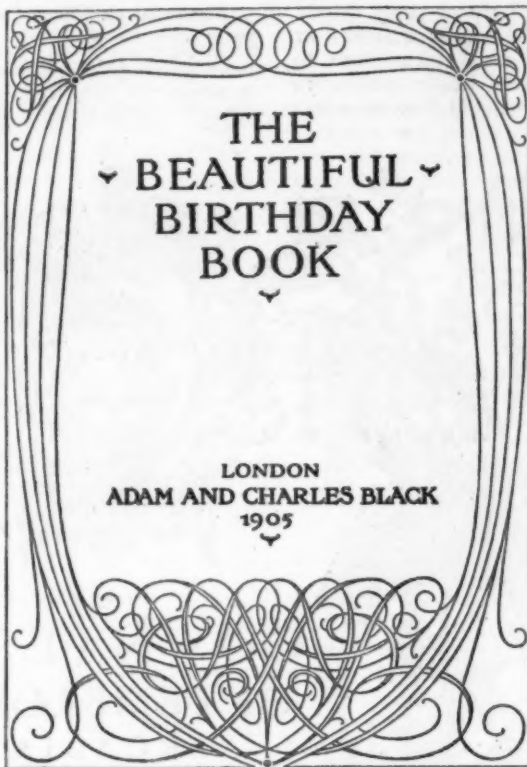
With its unconcerned allusions to the three English kings in whose reigns the translation and printing of the book was begun and finished, how picturesque and full of colour this epilogue seems when compared to the first English title-page which appeared a year or two later in an undated book from the press of William Machlinia. High up on the small quarto page are the two lines,

"A passing gode lityll boke neces-  
sarye &  
behouefull aȝenst the Pestilence."

and that is all the use made of an otherwise blank leaf. Caxton as long as he lived resisted this innovation, but when after his death in 1491 his foreman, Wynkyn de Worde, took over his business, experiments in title-pages quickly made their appearance. The first of these is a little longer than Machlinia's, but contains no more information, reading:

"The prouffitable boke for mannes soule And right comfortable to the body and specially in aduersitee & tribulation, which boke is called The Chastysynge of goddes Chyldern."

That in neither of these two



VII.—TITLE-PAGE OF "A BEAUTIFUL BIRTHDAY BOOK"  
(A. AND C. BLACK)

earliest English title-pages are we told the name of the author, was more or less an accident. Authors, especially those of recent date, were rather lightly thought of in the fifteenth century, books being often quoted only by their titles, and authorship, as long as the mediæval habit of borrowing freely from one's predecessors continued in fashion, being sometimes difficult to determine. If an author's name was likely to add anything to the popularity of a book, it was put on the title-page; if not, the title alone sufficed. The omission of the date of publication and the name of the printer or publisher was a matter of more regular custom. Such label title-pages, as we may call them, as were thus, soon after 1490, used in England, had come into fashion on the Continent nearly twenty years earlier, but until well into the sixteenth century the printer's epilogue or colophon, though shorn of most of its early attractions, was retained as the proper source of information as to these details, and in England practice in this and other typographical matters



VIII.—TITLE-PAGE TO LORD TENNYSON'S POEMS. DESIGNED BY MISS ELEANOR FORTESCUE - BRICKDALE, A.R.W.S. (GEORGE BELL AND SONS)



IX.—TITLE-PAGE OF DICKENS'S "CHRISTMAS CAROL." DESIGNED BY MR. C. E. BROCK. (J. M. DENT AND CO.)



lagged nearly a quarter of a century behind that of Germany, Italy and France.

About 1490 on the Continent, just as we were adopting the label title-page in its simplest form, foreign printers began using the blank space below the title-page to display their trade mark or device, which had previously been placed at the end of the book, or, as an alternative to this,

example. Originally made for the second edition, printed in 1593, this design has the unusual merit of being specially adapted to the book it was intended to recommend, two of the characters of the romance being introduced into it, while at the top is the Sidney badge and at the foot an emblem to warn off unfit readers. Other wood-cut borders were much more conventional in their designs, and gradu-

*Rosalinde Madrigall.*

**L**oue in my bosome like a Bee,  
doth suck his sweete:  
Now with his wings he plaies with me,  
now with his feete.  
Within mine eyes he makes his nest,  
His bed amidst my tender breast,  
My kisses are his daily feast,  
And yet he robs me of my rest,  
Ah wanton, will ye?  
And if I sleepe, then pearceheth he  
with prettie flight,  
And makes his pillow of my knee,  
the liue-long night.  
Strike I my lute, he tunes the string,  
He musicke plaies, if so I sing,  
He lends me euery louely thing,  
Yet cruell he my heart doth sting,  
Whist wanton still yee,  
Else I with Roses euery day  
will whip you hence:  
And bind you when you long to play,  
for your offence.  
He shut my eyes to keepe you in,  
He make you fast it for your sinne,  
He count your power not worth a pinne.  
Alas what hereby shall I winne,  
If he gaine say me?  
What if I beate the wanton boy  
with many a rod?  
He will repay me with annoy,  
because a God.  
Then sit thou safely on my knee,  
And let thy bower my bosome be,  
Lurke in mine eyes, I like of thee.  
O Cupid so thou pittie me,  
Spare not but play thee.

Scarce had Rosalind ended her Madrigall, before Torismond came in with his daughter Alinda, and many of the peers of France, who were enamored at her beauty: which Torismond perceiving, fearing least her perfection might be the beginning of his prejudice, and the hope of his fruit end in the beginning of her blossomes, he thought to banish her from the Court; for quoth he to himselfe, her

FACSIMILE OF "ROSALINDS MADRIGALL" FROM THOMAS LODGE'S  
"ROSALYNDE, OR EUPHUES GOLDEN LEGACIE."

a picture illustrative of its subject. This fashion was soon imitated by Wynkyn de Worde, as, for instance, in "The Castell of Labour" (Fig. III.) and numerous other of his small quartos, and the presence of a cut or device helps to add to the attractiveness of most English books of the sixteenth century. Devices, however, tended to get smaller and less important, and the decay of wood-cutting gradually made the title-cut less popular. What employment English wood-cutters found towards the end of the sixteenth century was mainly on ornamental borders, of which that here shown from the third edition of the Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia (Fig. IV.) is an uncommonly interesting

ally they fell into disuse before the engraved title-pages, on which Hole, Elstrack, Cecill, Marshall and other artists bestowed so much of their skill between 1590 and 1660. Many of these copperplate title-pages are delightful, that here shown (Fig. V.), designed by Cecill for the essays of Sir William Cornwallis in 1632, being an excellent specimen of the class.

For the next two centuries the only virtue which can be claimed for any English title-page is that of neatness, but the attempts of modern publishers deserve all encouragement. The experiments which are made almost daily are seldom less than interesting.

ALFRED W. POLLARD.

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merely upon this choice of subjects that we build our theory. That may conceivably have been accidental. What counts for more is the tone, the intensity, the despondency, the constitutional inability to laugh, or to see that there is anything in the world to laugh at, the frequent talk about the necessity of an "escape from life," and the occasional insistence upon the maddening effect on the human mind of a too attentive consideration of that perplexing problem of the whence and whither which exists for all of us. All this, it seems to us, is a not unnatural, or improbable effect, upon certain temperaments, quick to imagine and keen to feel, of a childhood passed in the presence, not merely of the problem itself, but of the most alarming solution of it that it has ever entered into the wit of man to devise. The more impressionable the child, the more likely it is in that sense to be the father of the man; and, if Mr. Symons's first chapter is to be read, with whatever qualifications, as fact, then he himself, widely as he differs from the brothers Hocking, is rightly to be regarded as the product and fine flower of Methodism, whether it be his habit to attend Methodist chapels at the present time or not.

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AMONG the writers who have managed, without any visible literary aptitude, to establish relations of a kind with literature, Mr. Clement K. Shorter occupies an interesting position which he has conquered by his industry in ferretting out facts of no particular importance. His instinct for these—we speak not in disparagement, but with a certain temperate admiration—is like that of a pig for truffles. On points of taste and scholarship one would not consult him; on questions of criticism one feels it superfluous to argue with him. Yet, in his way, and within his limits, he is wonderfully well informed. In the periodical Press he currently exhibits very much the sort of knowledge of literature that one would expect to be acquired by an intelligent barber who habitually shaved men of letters. He is the first to know (or, when Dr. Robertson Nicoll is the first, then he is the second to know) that such and such a literary lady is engaged to be married, and that such and such a novelist is going for a ride in a motor-car. That is his attitude towards the literature of to-day, and his attitude towards the literature of the past is similar. He looks up the tombstones of the mighty dead as diligently as Mr. Algernon Ashton himself, and he gets to know all about their next-door neighbours, and their great-aunts, and their first cousins once removed. 'Tis well; 'tis something. But it is not criticism; it is not even biography of the better kind.

The wonder is, indeed, that Mr. Shorter should have taken such heroic pains to write so indifferent a book. In a sense he knows far more about Charlotte Brontë than Mrs. Gaskell did. He is able to correct Mrs. Gaskell on many points; and no considerations of delicacy appear to restrain him from asking impertinent questions. He went all the way to Ireland to ask Charlotte Brontë's husband whether it was really true that his brother-in-law had been kicked out of Mr. Robinson's house for making love to Mr. Robinson's wife; and one hesitates to assign limits to the inquisitiveness of an inquirer capable of that. He also identifies the characters in "Shirley" with the deadly certainty of a village gossip at the afternoon tea-table. In fact he turns the searchlight upon a great number of matters of infinitesimal significance. What he fails to do is to realise Charlotte Brontë, or at all events to present any living picture of her to his readers. She was one of the Maggie Tullivers of real life. She lived the tragedy of which George Eliot was so fond of writing: the tragedy of genius encaged in an uncongenial environment. The limitations of her life were a source of strength as well as of distress. They compelled her to think things out for herself;

and she owed to them that originality in her point of view which arrested instant attention. She had only partly escaped from them when she died, though success had for some time been smiling on her. Atmosphere, therefore, is the one thing which it is especially needful for her biographer to reproduce. Mrs. Gaskell, with all her faults and misrepresentations, reproduced it. There was a certain weird quality in her picture of the life in the Haworth Rectory which has haunted our recollection ever since we first read the book, more years ago than we like to say. Her subject had inspired her. Even when she was careless as to her facts, what she wrote was artistically true. This inspiration, and this resulting artistic truth, are the things which we find conspicuously wanting in Mr. Shorter's work. He writes about Charlotte Brontë in the Mainly about People style, but without the glow which Mr. T. P. O'Connor imparts to it. He seems not to know Charlotte Brontë, but merely to know a good deal about her.

His style, too, is of the sloppiest. Sometimes it is the generalisations about art and artists that are sloppy. "Every great artist in every age has been very much in harmony with his environment" is the sort of generalisation that only needs to be tested to be confounded. More often, however, it is the composition of the sentences that is sloppy. "There is no reason to suppose but that she did her best," is at least clumsy. "Great animal spirits, immense self-confidence, all the qualities that made this ever arduous career possible although rarely pleasant were utterly lacking to this shy, retiring woman," is nonsense. Qualities that are "utterly lacking" cannot conceivably have any effect on any one's career. "Surely one takes the nature of an artist too pedantically to assume that her heroes in 'Villette' and 'The Professor' are primarily biographical" was presumably meant to mean something, but conveys no meaning as it stands. "Not until W. S. Williams and George Smith began to send her books from London did her mind take on a new aspect of truth," leaves us wondering how "aspects" are "taken on" by minds. And so forth, with a happy-go-lucky confusion of words which all readers zealous for the dignity and clarity of the English language will deplore.

### WHAT MAKES THE PERFECT LYRIC?

EDGAR ALLEN POE, in his Philosophy of Composition, endeavoured to explain step by step the making of his famous poem, "The Raven." But he who would write a perfect lyric could follow no method more fatal to success than that which Poe pursued. In a previous paper I insisted on simplicity as characteristic of the finest lyrical poetry—simplicity of metre and expression. Poe, on the other hand, sought to make his effect by means the reverse of these. In the first place he chose the refrain to produce his effect, in the second he relied on the originality of his metre to make that effect stronger. Now, the use of the refrain, besides being bad art, betrays, as a rule, a barrenness of invention, while a poem that relies on the originality of its metre is usually original in that and nothing else. It was only Poe's rare faculty of imagination, combined with a natural gift of style that—as one of his critics remarks—saved such a precarious feat of word-play as "The Raven," from being merely laid aside in the cabinet of the literary curio-hunter. And it is remarkable how few are the lyrics of abiding excellence which make use of the refrain, or of which the effect can be attributed to aught but their own intrinsic sweetness. The Epithalamion and Prothalamion of Spenser are striking examples of the weakening effect of the refrain, its use in these poems being to introduce an air of monotony and to lessen the impression produced by destroying the individuality of the different stanzas. The ear is gradually filled with the sing-song of the refrain, until the whole poem is resolved into the two unvarying lines. Whether Poe meant his Philosophy of Composition

seriously, and intended it to be so taken, or not, is a matter of no moment, because his methods make no appeal to the true artist. That they produced a poem like "The Raven," is a literary surprise which is not likely to be repeated. And that Poe's outlook and judgment on poetry were neither very broad nor very deep, is clear from his extravagant praise of Tennyson and corresponding contempt for Wordsworth. Of the former he said: "I regard him as the noblest poet that ever lived"; while of the latter he could say nothing better than: "I have no faith in him." But the subject of this paper is: what makes the perfect lyric—not how it is made—and Poe's Philosophy of Composition has merely been cited to show how it ought *not* to be made. For if the poet is born, not made, the perfect lyric is not the outcome of his art save in so far as that art is the natural expression of himself. In other words, a poet must be a man first, and a poet afterwards, if he is to make a bid for immortality. For a poet is only a man who can express more sweetly and forcibly than his fellows that which they also see and feel. In most of our finest lyrics the humanity of the poet is the dominant note, the note which gives them their peculiar charm and sweetness. And this is true not only of those lyrics which are concerned with the passions of the heart, but also of those which seek to portray the beauties of nature. Indeed, Sir Joshua Reynolds confessed himself unable to discover any charm in a landscape picture from which the human element was absent. So, a mere catalogue of the beauties of nature without reference, direct or indirect, to the influence of those beauties on the writer's heart or mind has the same unsatisfying effect as would the painted scenery of a play without actors. The charms of nature are accessories only to the poet's art, and must be used to heighten the effect which he desires to produce on the feelings of his readers. They are the background which lend light and shade to his utterances. And it is this power of identifying himself with nature, and of making her serve his moods that distinguishes the true poet from the mere versifier. That this is true must be confessed after a perusal of the lyrics of Burns, and Wordsworth, and Shelley, and the odes of Keats. And—to take Wordsworth first, to whom nature never spoke or looked with the voice and eyes of hopeless passion or disappointed love, but who regarded her rather as a child does its mother—it is impossible to find among his greater lyrics one wherein the human note is not predominant. For in him the meanest flower could awaken thoughts too deep for tears. He regarded nature as the symbol of all that is pure and sweet and undefined. The voice of the cuckoo was as the voice of immortal youth, the dance of the daffodils an inward and abiding bliss, a flower's purity touched an infinite pathos. No poet before Wordsworth, as none after him, has succeeded in identifying himself so thoroughly with the inner beauty of nature. And that is why he has left so many lyrics of such exquisite thought and expression. For, as he himself said: "To the solid ground of Nature trusts the mind that builds for aye."

Burns's outlook on nature was much narrower than that of Wordsworth, because for him her beauties were so often tainted with the melancholy hues of an unhappy love. He made use of her to accentuate the agonies of parting and separation or to sadden the face of memory; she speaks to himself alone, and the race of unhappy lovers. But in the art of using the grace and loveliness of nature to throw into stronger relief the pangs of disappointed love, Burns stands supreme. "Ye banks and braes o' bonie Doon" has never been surpassed in that wide yet difficult path of poetry which looks for its effect to the contrast it draws between the outward calm and beauty of external objects, and the inward pangs which they inflict upon the heart. How beautiful and haunting is the beginning of this lyric! Indeed, the first stanza is a poem in itself:

"Ye banks and braes o' bonie Doon  
How can ye blume sae fair!  
How can ye chant, ye little birds."

Here the scene is put before our eyes in a few simple words with the note of pathos already heard in the poignant questioning of the second and third lines, to culminate in the despairing human cry:

"And I sae fu' o' care."

Truly a complete and perfect poem. The after verses, in their explanation of the singer's sadness, are in a descending scale; the climax is reached in the first verse, the high note of passion is struck; all that should be told is said. There is no opening stanza in any lyric in the language which has set its succeeding verses such an impossible task as does the first verse of this wonderful "Banks and braes." But, though a poet may touch the high note of passion in a single verse and satisfy his own ideas of what constitutes the finest art, he cannot so satisfy others whose ears are not so fine and whose perception is less keen. Having heard the best, they want more and are not particular if it be of inferior quality. And perhaps Poe in his admirable "Poetic Principle" was right in his contention that a very short poem, while now and then producing a brilliant or vivid, never produced a profound or enduring effect. But Poe should have gone further, and given as the reason for this the fact that the mass of mankind is unimaginative, and that it is only the few who find a greater charm in suggestion than in actual expression. For suggestion, which is really the *πῶθος* that Aristotle demands of all great poetry, is the sign-manual of the finest poetical genius. And the poem which Poe quotes as an instance of the effect of undue brevity in depressing a poem—perhaps the most nearly perfect love-song in the language—would have been a purer gem without the third and final verse, with its descent from the pure air of dreams to the world of materialism. But it would be idle to suppose that "Ye banks and braes" would occupy the place it does, or indeed to imagine that it would occupy any place at all among the immortal poems of the world on such a seemingly slender support as its first four lines; and yet there are four famous lines by the same author which may be said to have produced the effect of a complete poem, in which the whole of love's tragedy is expressed:

"Had we never lov'd sae kindly,  
Had we never lov'd sae blindly,  
Never met—or never parted,  
We had ne'er been broken hearted."

And if, as has been truly remarked, a collection of the finest poetry in the world would fill but a slender volume, yet how much slimmer would that volume be if the poems contained therein were reduced to their proper proportions.

But if the power to suggest a beauty, or a joy or sadness beyond what is visible in the words of a poem is a proof of poetical genius, it is more especially true of that genius which is essentially lyrical. Our finest lyrical poets are they whose poetry suggests more than it expresses, who have breathed into the dead forms of human speech a haunting and elusive music beyond expression. And this power has a hundred gradations, and is shown in a hundred different ways. It is apparent in "Drink to me only with thine eyes"—those honey-sweet words which Ben Jonson stole from the Greek, and yet marred not in the stealing. *Ἐμοὶ δὲ μόνους πρόπινε τοῖς ὄμμασιν . . . Ἐὶ δὲ βούλει τοῖς χεῖλεσι προσφέρουσα πλῆρον φιλημάτων τὸ ἔκπωμα καὶ οὕτως δίδου.* Wordsworth had it:

"Will no one tell me what she sings?  
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow  
For old, unhappy, far-off things,  
And battles long ago."

And Shelley:

"I fear thy kisses, gentle maiden,  
Thou needest not fear mine;  
My spirit is too deeply laden,  
Ever to burthen thine."

Coleridge was a master of the suggestive method; indeed, as his fame as a poet rests more on what he could have done than on what he did, so do his poems owe their charm more to their suggestiveness than to any tangible



or visible form of beauty they express. "Kubla Khan"—a poem not strictly within the bounds of lyrical poetry, though lyrical in form—is the crowning example of what I have named the suggestive method, because, though many poems have succeeded for the space of two or three lines in evoking the fugitive glamour of dreams, yet this poem throughout its entire length sustains an atmosphere of mystic and elusive loveliness. Keats is never so fine as when he is merely suggestive. Not to mention the oft-quoted lines from "The Nightingale," he has left no verses of more haunting and melancholy music than "La Belle Dame Sans Merci." And Shakespeare—who must come into every discussion of poetry, no matter what the point at issue—Shakespeare also is a master of the impersonal lyric, of that style of poetry which is without human aspiration, without desire, or regret, fugitive and elusive as the beauty of a dream. "Come unto these yellow sands," with its fragile and airy delicacy and sweetness, is in a different way of excellence from "Ye banks and braes," or "Had we never lov'd sae kindly," and makes its appeal to the imagination. For though no poet can afford to sacrifice his humanity to his art, yet sometimes it is allowed him to wrap himself in the mantle of his dreams, and speak to us from far untrodden lands whither we cannot follow. And the personal and impersonal lyric have this in common: both should suggest more than they express, for the lyric which leaves the sweetest and saddest word unsaid and the deepest thought unspoken, and yet by the magic of its art insinuates that word or thought into our hearts and minds, is a jewel of rarer and finer quality than the poem which leaves nothing to the imagination.

I have said nothing about metre, because metre is the least concern of a great poet, and because I endeavoured to show in a former paper that simplicity of metre and expression is almost the uniform rule of our finest lyrics. And it is not, as Poe would have us believe, a word or a metre that suggests the thought, but the thought that suggests the metre and appropriate expression. Because, when a perfect thought arises in the brain of genius, it comes ready dressed in all its singing robes.

But enough has been said to show the difficulties that beset the path of him who would write a perfect lyric, indeed to formulate a doubt as to whether the perfect lyric has yet been written.

R. G. T. COVENTRY.

## THE IDEAL

(FROM SULLY PRUDHOMME)

### I

THE moon is large, the heaven fair  
And full of stars; the earth is spent;  
All the world's soul is in the air:  
Of one great star magnificent

### II

I dream, of one I may not see  
And yet whose light must, travelling, gauge  
The eternal space and come to be  
The glory of another age.

### III

When at the last it shines above,  
Fairest and farthest star in space,  
Then let it know it had my love,  
Oh! latest of the human race!

DOROTHY FRANCES GURNEY.

## THE JOURNALS OF DOROTHY WORDSWORTH

IN a letter addressed to R. C. Trench in 1851, William Bodham Donne wrote: "I am reading with much interest Wordsworth's 'Memoirs.' How very beautiful are Miss Wordsworth's remarks in his journal. She was the born poet of the two." This, no doubt, was set down in a moment of enthusiasm, but, coming from so acute a critic and appreciator as Donne, it carries a certain weight. No reader of Dorothy's journals—and readers are too few—can fail to see that in them a delicate and sensitive spirit expressed itself so far as it dared to permit itself expression. We always feel that Dorothy Wordsworth deliberately left much unsaid, partly out of loyalty to others, partly because the early nineteenth century, in England at least, was inimical to the finer confidences, and partly because she herself had chosen—with what pangs and questionings cannot be conjectured—a life of personal repression. So that in these journals of hers we have little of the psychology which makes the diary of such an absolute modern as Marie Bashkirtseff profoundly alluring; we have none of the flashes of insight into human character which redeem much that is merely trivial and almost *banal* in the letters of Madame D'Arblay; but we have the finest sympathetic appreciations of nature ever written by any woman, appreciations, we believe, in no way inspired by the genius of her brother, but self-evolved and nursed in the solitude of a soul that deliberately resolved to shut out certain of the joys of life. Sometimes, in reading Dorothy Wordsworth's journals, we seem to hear the cry of an imprisoned spirit.

It was not until 1897 that we had the journals practically complete in the admirable two-volume edition edited by Professor Knight. Twenty-three years before, the "Recollections of a Tour made in Scotland" in 1803 had been edited in full by the late Principal Shairp; in Professor Knight's "Life of William Wordsworth," also, a good deal had been included, but only a consecutive and uninterrupted reading could give a complete impression. The first of the journals is that kept by Dorothy Wordsworth at Alfoxden from January 20 to May 22, 1798. Three years before she had added her small fortune to what "my William," as she called her brother, possessed, and had thrown in her lot with his in a spirit which cannot be regarded but as one of fine self-sacrifice. Indeed, in the whole history of letters there is no other instance in which genius was so willing to be servant to genius. Alfoxden was near to Nether Stowey, where Coleridge was living with his wife, and the intercourse between the two households was constant. As every one knows, it was here that the "Lyrical Ballads" were projected and mainly written. But that is an old story with which we have no concern. The important point for the moment is that here Dorothy Wordsworth came into almost daily contact with Coleridge, and that immortal dreamer, profound philosopher, and monument of instability had probably more influence over her than has been supposed. Her journals are full of his comings and goings; she waits upon him with the utmost solicitude; she walks and talks with him in an atmosphere of romance suggested rather than expressed. To Coleridge it meant little, but to this exquisitely sensitive woman it may have meant much. In that once wayward and impetuous heart were sown seeds whose blossoming had to be repressed. This, of course, is conjecture, but a loving intimacy with the journals makes one of necessity read between the lines.

To turn to the journals themselves. They are mainly concerned with nature rather than with men; on almost every page there is close observation and a simple power of expression that holds reserves of imagination. To quote from the Alfoxden journal:

"We rose early. A thick fog obscured the distant prospect entirely, but the shapes of the nearer trees and the dome of the wood dimly seen and dilated. It cleared away between ten and eleven. The

shapes of the mist, slowly moving along, exquisitely beautiful; passing over the sheep they almost seemed to have more of life than those quiet creatures. The unseen birds singing in the mist.

A very high wind. Coleridge came to avoid the smoke; stayed all night. We walked in the wood, and sat under the trees. The half of the wood perfectly still, while the wind was making a loud noise behind us. The still trees only gently bowed their heads, as if listening to the wind. The hollies in the thick wood unshaken by the blast; only, when it came with a greater force, shaken by the rain drops falling from the bare oaks above."

But more valuable and interesting are the Grasmere journals. There the writer was at home, moving among the sweet familiarities of some of the most inspiring scenery in England. When the journal opens (May 1800) she and William had been settled in Dove Cottage for some months. The first note is sad, for it records a parting, and no doubt it was loneliness that inspired Dorothy once again to turn to the companionship of self-expression. William and their brother John had set off on a journey into Yorkshire: "My heart was so full that I could hardly speak to W. when I gave him a farewell kiss. I sate a long time upon a stone at the margin of the lake, and after a flood of tears my heart was easier." But soon that mood passed, resolved by the consolation which these two never failed to draw from "the universal mother of us all." We are inclined to think that Dorothy's appreciation of nature was more intimate than her brother's; she could not raise it to those serene and philosophic heights where it became merged in the very spirit of the universe, but she saw details with a clearer eye and drank as deeply as he from the wells of consolation: "Rydale very beautiful, with spear-shaped streaks of polished steel. . . . Grasmere very solemn in the last glimpse of twilight. It calls home the heart to quietness." How much Wordsworth owed to his sister's notes and journals every reader of his works knows; she gave him freely both of her personal service and of her finest thoughts. Indeed, one often becomes exasperated with "dear William," to whom this woman sacrificed so much. She makes, bakes and mends for him, copies out his verses, tires herself to death about the house, and on a bitterly cold night is afraid to get herself more blankets for fear of waking him. Yet such devotion as hers must needs justify itself, and doubtless "dear William" was tender enough when he was in the mood. Here is a winter evening picture that one would not miss:

"I read German, and at the closing-in of day, went to sit in the orchard. William came to me, and walked backwards and forwards. . . . Wm. repeated the poem ('The Cuckoo') to me. I left him there, and in twenty minutes he came in, rather tired with attempting to write. He is now reading Ben Jonson. I am going to read German. It is about ten o'clock, a quiet night. The fire flickers, and the watch ticks. I hear nothing save the breathing of my Beloved as he now and then pushes his book forward, and turns over a leaf. . . ."

There are so many beautiful and characteristic passages in these Grasmere journals that it is difficult to select for quotation, but the following cannot be passed by; it is almost as lovely as Wordsworth's "I wandered lonely as a cloud," which it closely resembles:

"When we were in the woods beyond Gowbarrow Park we saw a few daffodils close to the water-side. We fancied that the sea had floated the seeds ashore, and that the little colony had so sprung up. But as we went along there were more and yet more; and at last, under the boughs of the trees, we saw that there was a long belt of them along the shore, about the breadth of a country turnpike road. I never saw daffodils so beautiful. They grew among the mossy stones about and above them; some rested their heads upon these stones, as on a pillow, for weariness; and the rest tossed and reeled and danced, and seemed as if they verily laughed with the wind, that blew upon them over the lake, they looked so gay, ever glancing, ever changing. This wind blew directly over the lake to them. There was here and there a little knot, and a few stragglers higher up; but they were so few as not to disturb the simplicity, unity, and life of that one busy highway."

In 1802 Wordsworth married his cousin, Mary Hutchinson, and the third Grasmere journal concludes on a note of pathos poignantly simple. Three months before the marriage brother and sister were walking together at night, and Dorothy wrote:

"O beautiful place! Dear Mary, William. The hour is come . . . I must prepare to go. The swallows, I must leave them, the wall, the garden, the roses, all. Dear creatures! they sang last night after I was in bed; seemed to be singing to one another, just before they settled to rest for the night. Well, I must go. Farewell."

But this desolation at parting never came about. It would seem that Dorothy was essential to her brother's life; at any rate, she remained, in the changed circumstances, to minister to husband and wife with the same beautiful simplicity as that with which she had ministered to the brother alone.

## A LITERARY CAUSERIE

DOUDAN

IN the eighteenth century the genius of a writer was commonly displayed in his letters or conversation as well as in his published works. Modern authors, inspired wholly by that preoccupation with popular success which gives an outward play to every faculty, take the public alone into their confidence, and reserve all their talent for their books. Their minds resemble those dreary drawing-rooms in the houses of thrifty housewives, in which a fire is lighted only when a large company is expected. Since literature became a trade, the art of letter-writing, especially, has declined; it seems to have survived merely among a few men of wayward genius, such as Edward FitzGerald in England, and Ximénès Doudan in France, who were too indolent to enter upon a literary career.

Doudan was a man more anxious than FitzGerald to make a certain order of ideas prevail, and yet more averse from the labour of composition. In the four volumes of letters which represent his life's work, one comes upon many a charming apology for indolence:

"I have drowned myself in the waters of this great library, and above my head there are twenty feet of books which I want to finish before I leave. I know quite well that this infinite curiosity is a sort of idleness, and, perhaps, the worst of all, because it seems like work. Yet the taste for study, the passion for letters, has one very great advantage. It teaches a man to isolate himself from all the accidents of existence, and bestows upon him pleasures that wind or rain cannot mar. Those who have this cast of mind possess a strong retreat upon inaccessible heights. Yet it is not without its grave inconveniences. Little by little it induces the habit of living in a world of fancies, and, indubitably, it must weaken slightly the forces of the soul. Still, to add a little poetry to the realities of life, is a charming occupation. Macaulay says that an acre in Middlesex is worth more than a principality in Utopia; but there are not acres enough upon this earth to replace all the principalities in Utopia. Of course, when men grow insensible to the pleasures of the mind, which are open to all, they needs must set themselves to acquire riches, because riches yield certain conventional gratifications which are within the reach of the lowest imaginations. But he who cannot adorn a cell with the luxury of his dreams, will inhabit vainly a palace."

Books, he held, were persons of merit without the defects of persons of merit. Stronger, nevertheless, in him than the love of reading, was the desire for intercourse with his fellow men. Instead of seeking, like FitzGerald, a retreat from the fret of modern life, in some lonely house in the country, he retired, with more quietness and freedom from trouble, into his own soul. A man of fine charm of person, and incomparable power in conversation, he lived with the Duc de Broglie in the centre of the intellectual and political life of Paris, where, by reason of the influence he exerted over the intellects of men of more energetic temper, he became one of the hidden forces of his age. Cousin said of him that no one since Voltaire had so much brilliancy of mind; Sainte-Beuve, who also knew him merely by his conversation, ranked him, even in his lifetime, in one of the *Causeries du Lundi*, with Joubert. The two comparisons may seem incongruous; but in Doudan in fact, somewhat of the wit and sparkle of the first writer



was employed in the propagation of a frame of thought not unlike that of the second. He was frankly an idealist:

"I have for a long time been of opinion that a man with only clear ideas of things is a fool. The finest elements of the human mind are all in the background and twilight, and it is about these confused notions, the connections of which escape us, that the clear ideas revolve in order to extend, develop and raise themselves. Were we cut off from this background, only geometricians and other intelligent animals would remain on earth; and besides the exact sciences would lose the grandeur which they derive from their secret links with the infinite truths which we suspect, and of which, at moments, we believe we catch a glimpse. The domain of the unknown is the richest patrimony of mankind."

"Blessed are they," Doudan observed, "who do not let themselves go with the current of other people's ideas." He, at least, was happy in occupying the position of being opposed to those around him on most subjects of importance. The doctrinaire party, to which he belonged, was largely composed of men with a strong but narrow grasp of mind, who combined a mania for superficial generalisations with no mean facility in the art of exposition. In contrast to this order of genius is a more delicate type, which, until the great Revolution, seemed to be peculiarly French. It is represented in literature by writers with a gift for seeing everything in just and exquisite detail, and an aversion from measuring by means of straight lines so diverse and undulating a thing as human nature. Their wit is tinged with poetry, as it arises from the interaction of common sense and imagination. No doubt, the play of their imaginative power is thereby restricted, but the outcome is a rare flexibility, balance, and vivacity of mind. This was the sort of genius which Doudan possessed. But much of his energy was spent in defending himself from the spirit of his age:

"That strange creature called the world, whose forms vary, but whose force is everywhere the same, attacks one in those regions of the soul which appear the most inaccessible to exterior influences. It acts on a man's mode of feeling, as well as on his way of thinking, and steals from him a part of his proper nature, in order to animate him with the mobile spirit of the crowd."

To so independent and unambitious a man as Doudan a seat in the French Academy seemed as little worth the having as the positions under the Government which were also offered to him:

"I quite understand," he remarked to a correspondent, "the pleasure to be found in calling oneself a Member of the Institute. In growing old we fall back upon the commonplaces of existence, and come again under the *consensus omnium*. As the stock of self-esteem with which we enter upon life wears away, we end, simply enough, by relying upon others' opinions of us. I therefore demand instantly all the dignities on earth, and I shall be much obliged if will you let me have them by the next post. I have said good-bye to hope, and I want titles and seats in academies. Isn't this the form of melancholy and discouragement of the age?"

So, to the end of his life he preserved his clearness and independence of judgment as a student of human nature in the abstract, and, more particularly, of human nature as exhibited in his contemporaries, and in the literature, art, and manners of his age. His letters are, especially, remarkable for a series of portraits, in light but telling traits, of all the men of his time eminent in letters or politics. He is a keen critic, with a sort of gaily ironic humour, but only in some of his later sketches, such as that of Renan, is there a certain want of urbanity:

"It is a pity," he wrote to a friend, in 1858, "that the intellectual ideal of this youthful seditionary is not evident. The truth is that like a young colt he takes a pleasure in gambolling. To this liveliness of the colt he adds a little of the malice of a monkey. Some vague ideas are certainly necessary, and the man with only clear ideas will never discover anything; still, a few fairly solid bones are required to support any living being that is not of the serpent race. I do not see the bones of M. Renan."

This was said of the "*Essais de Morale et de Critique*," a work on which Matthew Arnold remarked, about the same time, that "it tended to inculcate morality, in a high

sense of the word, upon the French nation, as what they most wanted." But, as was afterwards patent in the "*Drames philosophiques*," Doudan's view of Renan was not altogether incorrect. Doudan, indeed, was one of the best critics of his age, and many men of letters looked upon him as a sort of director of their literary conscience. The reason why he did not himself produce any work was, perhaps, that he dismayed himself by contemplating too high a standard of perfection. But a remarkable "*History of Poetry*" seems to have occupied in his thoughts the same position as that wonderful "*History of Liberty*" occupied in the mind of the late Lord Acton.

"My idea," he wrote, "is to take up the chain of the great poets from the beginning, and watch them pass from hand to hand the torch of the ideal; to make a list, which would not be long, of all the men who have in turn coloured with the hues of their imagination the mind of mankind; to see what fades and what endures, from Job to Byron, in the changing images of eternal beauty. It is like a rainbow stretching from the burnt plains of the East to the mists of England. In travelling across this tract of time one would pass by the summer-palace of Solomon, one would find Homer in Ionia, Sophocles at Athens, the Aventine and Virgil, Dante and the Arno, and Eden about the little cottage of Milton. All the history of the world is there, as much as in the chronicles, in traits more lively and more brilliant."

In regard to modern literature, Doudan—and this is a special interest in his letters for English readers—preferred before all others our poets and novelists. What he appreciated in an author was that depth and that sincerity of feeling which distinguish poetry, however simple, from rhetoric, however splendid. Of the writers of the French romantic school he remarked:

"Their emotions are all on one side, and their feelings on another. They are moved, so to speak, in cold blood. But Shelley would probably have been slain by the intensity of his feelings, if he had not been drowned. Things weighed on him, Shelley, personally and directly. He had not a little chamber set apart, in which music could be played without disturbing all the house."

His own ideas of romance, he said, were centred upon narrow and difficult lives led with energy and serenity; and he liked to seek for the poetic side of things in that point by which a particular case is connected with the harmony of nature. The old-fashioned English novel of common life, with its justness and delicacy of observation and good-humoured outlook on the world, not only entertained, but inspired him:

"It is by means of good novels," he observed, "that France, England, and Germany have been partly civilised. They have contributed far more than all the homilies of pedants, to enkindle in the mass of men a spark of the poetic fire. They have given to society its delicacy of mind, and its relish for noble feelings. In fact, they have accomplished in modern times what chivalry is said to have done in the middle ages. But it seems that the French imagination is incapable of embellishing the quiet and unpretending ways of life. The English alone know how to do that. We have devoted ourselves to the writing of generalities calculated to please the rest of the world; the thousand little things of which the fibres of a family or of a province are composed, these we cannot reveal. The difference between the English novelists and the French novelists is the difference between those who say what they feel, and those who say what they think they ought to feel in order to make an effect."

Doudan's taste was moulded in no slight measure by the study of English literature. There is in him something of the temper of our essayists, mingled with the charm and idiosyncrasy of a fine French genius. His art is exquisite. Yet he wrote with the same unpremeditated play of thought and fancy as he conversed. His letters were merely an idle pastime, taken up, in a fashion now obsolete, for the entertainment of his friends. But it may be that it was just because he did not make a business of literature that Doudan has won, by general consent, a place beside Mme. de Sévigné, the Prince de Ligne, Joubert, and other famous amateurs of letters.

EDWARD WRIGHT.

[Next week's *Causerie* will be "*The Less-Known Flaubert*" by Ford Madox Hueffer.]



## FICTION

*French Nan.* By AGNES AND EGERTON CASTLE. With illustrations by F. H. TOWNSEND. (Smith, Elder, 6s.)

"FRENCH NAN" is a story of married lovers from the pens of those distinguished collaborators, Mr. and Mrs. Egerton Castle—a study of the "conflict of hearts and wit—full of wrath at times, but never devoid of courtesy—between the chivalrous if iron-willed young English squire, home-keeping by taste and country-loving above all things, and his girl-wife, bred amid the artificialities of a Versailles Court and still afire for the excitement of the Town." Lady Anne Day is a fascinating little cat of a woman, of an infinite variety of mood and temper, inconsequent, caressing, playful, spiteful, at one moment the sweetest child in the world, at the next the most bewildering, intractable creature that any husband ever attempted to tame, and "she would not be taught by a kiss." Her claws are rarely withdrawn in her intercourse with her husband, and never in her relation towards other women. Accustomed to the gaiety of the French Court, Nan languishes at Queen's Compton, quarrels with Philip over a season in town, runs away to her parents in St. James's Square and is brought home again like a child in disgrace. Another "scene" follows, and she receives permission to visit Lady Kilcroney—the Kitty Bellairs of delightful memory. Kitty, quick-witted and sharp-tongued as of old, is hardly a match for Lady Anne in her provoking moods, and some lively and amusing passages ensue between the friends shortly to become almost enemies. Annoyed with Nan for creating a scandal, and irritated by a mild rebuke from her still enamoured husband, Lord Kilcroney, Kitty retorts that her once "sweetest Nan" "is the silliest piece I have ever dealt with, and I have known many fools in my time." More than a little truth lurks in that impatient exclamation. So Nan, unchecked on her headstrong course, runs all the risks of a pretty lady of fashion of her day; Philip always at hand to avert every threatened catastrophe, paying gambling debts, fighting a duel, even playing for high stakes himself, all in the way of taming his rebellious wife to come at his call. The little romance is beautifully dressed and decorated. Moving in luxurious surroundings, its personages have manners of the courtliest, and also an amazing rudeness and insolence. Are we really justified in complaining of the deterioration of manners to-day? No Bridge party could show more ill-breeding than that to be found in Lady Buckinghamshire's card-room, and between Lady Anne and her family incivility is the rule. "French Nan" is a charming story, thrown off, we hope, on the way between that powerful book, "Rose of the World" and another of the same distinction. There is nothing here so deeply interesting, or so strong and original in treatment. It is of another order altogether; a tale in Dresden china, so dainty and clever as fully to satisfy the taste for Dresden, but arousing no very strong feeling. The numerous illustrations are, in nearly every instance, exceptionally good.

*The Secret Kingdom.* By FRANK RICHARDSON. (Duckworth, 6s.)

As a nation we are not fond of nonsense, and we have had few really first-rate writers of nonsense, in the sense of irresponsible fun that is content to play about like summer lightning without aiming in any severely ordered manner at anything in particular. In Mr. Frank Richardson, the author of this book (which his publishers, in obedience to his instructions, have bound in the ugliest cover ever perpetrated in England), we have a writer of nonsense. It is not first-rate nonsense; but it is refreshing and amusing to read after all the deadly serious stuff with which most of our writers of fiction endeavour to keep up the national character. Mr. Richardson reminds us of nothing so much as the clown with the bladder, who hits about at everybody's head in turn. He does not care whom he hits so long as he hits somebody, be it Mr. Anthony Hope, Miss

Marie Corelli, M. Maurice Maeterlinck, Ouida, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle or any other. His blows are all delivered in good-humour and most of them make one laugh. Except whiskers, indeed, there seems to be nothing in life which Mr. Richardson really dislikes, and his book, which is full of high spirits and cleverness, may be recommended to all who are suffering from a surfeit of literary "stodge," as schoolboys call it.

*The Journeys of Antonia.* By CHRISTIAN DUNDAS. (Unwin, 6s.)

OF the heroines of five novels read consecutively in which the interest centres upon a girl falling in love with somebody else's husband, Antonia comes through the experience with the nearest approach to dignity. Not that she is a prude; she is an intensely modern young woman with an Italian mother, a flat and a cigarette-case of her own. We are not at all convinced that Antonia would have loved the evil-looking stranger who gets her into his private railway coach by a trick, and insults her by "kissing her full upon the lips with a rude, almost brutal force." At the best, it is not an ideal introduction to the love of a life; but it serves the author's purpose, and thereafter Antonia meets with nothing quite so startling upon her journeys. In spite of the Italian mother, she does not defy the proprieties. The mother is, indeed, a delightful example of a great lady, and in her attitude towards her daughter both heart-wise and worldly-wise. This is almost a discovery in irregular love-stories. Spanish and Italian mothers, whether in the flesh or spirit, are very rarely on the side of the angels when their unlucky daughters love where they should not. The vulgar wife of the millionaire of the kissing episode, her lover, and her fate, interest us not at all. She is a much too familiar figure; and the author makes no attempt at an original sketch, but offers an indifferent impression taken from a very worn plate. It is with characters better worth drawing that she succeeds, and she may believe that she can afford to leave Mrs. Morrier and her kin out of her collection of portraits. Though there are one or two ugly points of view to be passed during Antonia's journeys, she is upon the whole an agreeable fellow traveller, unaffected, gay and good-natured.

*Renunciation.* By DOROTHY SUMMERS. (Unwin, 6s.)

"WHY need you write such a story, Dare?" asks Joan Bryant, the friend of Dare Thorpe who is confiding his own tragedy to her in the quest of the plot of his novel; and Miss Dorothy Summers, who has told the history of Dare Thorpe in "Renunciation," should have asked herself the same question before she wrote her book. "Renunciation" is one of those novels which should never have been written. The theme, as it is dealt with, is horrible, and it serves no artistic purpose. The author has the right to choose the subject of her novel, but its place in art depends upon her treatment, and Miss Summers presents us with a life-story whose tragic elements have overwhelmed her, a theme to whose narration she has brought no philosophy, no wide knowledge of life, none of those interpretative and elementary qualities which might have given her work a place in art. The story of Dare Thorpe appeals to her as it would appeal to those of his friends who were at once devoted, ignorant and narrow-minded; and she narrates its later developments with an emotion which is distressing, and the earlier incidents of her novel with an unwarrantable premonition of the tragedy to come. Dare Thorpe is one of the finest athletes in England, and the heroine, Lady Iris Ireton, thinks she has never seen "such a perfect face." In a fairy tale into which we need not enter, these young people fall in love, and, although Dare is weak after rheumatic fever contracted through saving the girl's brother's life, and Iris will forfeit her fortune unless she marries her cousin, there seems no reason for the depression and misery, the always "haggard despairing look on the tired young face" which Dare exhibits during their hours together in the south of France. On his return to

England, however, the mystery is made clear. We learn that he has atrophy, that he will slowly waste into a hideous, deformed cripple; this fate is accomplished with unredeemed unhappiness to everybody concerned, and with some incidents, notably the pelting with mud of Dare by a London mob, which it is impossible to condone. Most of the characters in the novel are quite inconsistent in their behaviour, their emotions being entirely uncontrolled, but the cruelty of the latter part of the story makes us forget the mental irritation caused by the earlier chapters. Otherwise we might not remember with indifference that "Lord Cyril Stone" is the son of an earl, that one summer comes eighteen months after its predecessor, that the ice (they skate a great deal) is always "swaying up suddenly" round the heroine, and that the hero has a persistent habit of sitting back as if he had been shot.

*The House of Mirth.* By EDITH WHARTON. (Macmillan, 6s.)

"MIRTH," Mr. Spectator once observed, "is like a flash of lightning, that breaks through a gloom of clouds, and glitters for a moment." Mrs. Wharton's novel is concerned with a girl, moving in "select" circles in New York, to whom mirth is essential. Lily Bart is beautiful, honourable, and brilliant; but she is also poor—very poor—and her love of luxury is even greater than her craving for the society of the "best" people, and an environment which shall make for gaiety and mirth: it is, indeed, the daemon of her existence, and in gaining it she loses her beauty, her honour, and her soul. "The House of Mirth" is a record of the tragedy of a finely-tempered, high-spirited, high-souled girl, whose life is wrecked through a single failing. There is no plot—no attempt at plot. The thing which stands out is the author's sympathetic delineation of her heroine's character, her acute analysis of a woman's mind. With keen insight she traces Miss Bart's career from the day she is introduced to us on a New York platform—young, untainted by her contact with Society, chafing at the bonds of convention, and going home to tea with a bachelor in order to show her contempt for them—till, friendless and poverty-stricken, she allows Gus Trenor to "invest" money for her. Thenceforward, with no less insight, Mrs. Wharton traces her gradual downfall: "bringing out" bloated plutocrats, descending to lower and lower strata of Society, working as a milliner's apprentice, and finally making a last effort to redeem her mis-spent life. Mrs. Wharton has done many good things—she has never done anything better than this. She has lost none of the wit and humour which abounded in "The Valley of Decision," "The Descent of Man," and even in "Sanctuary"; her dialogue is clever, fresh and sparkling; she has a fine discrimination—a natural, unstudied discrimination—in the use of words; and her style is graceful and fluent.

*The Amethyst Box, and other stories.* By A. K. GREEN. (Chatto & Windus, 6s.)

THERE are some books as miraculous in their ingenuity as conjuring tricks, and as elaborate as artificial flowers. Their strength lies rather in construction than in characterisation. Bearing the same relation to life as a chess problem to a police court case, they achieve their success through sustained secrecy, and subtlety of situation. "The Amethyst Box" is an excellent example. The bridegroom, at a wedding-party on the night before the ceremony, exhibits as a curiosity a little gem from his collections: a box made of a single amethyst, containing a tiny flask of very powerful poison. He explains its deadliness with some enthusiasm, enjoying the horror of his audience. But at the mention of poison, he hears a half-suppressed eager exclamation from behind him, where stand alone his bride and the girl loved by the man who is supposed to tell the tale. The box is stolen, and both girls have been seen to enter the room where it was placed. The bridegroom and the story-teller are convinced that one or other

girl has taken the thing, and each hopes against hope that his is not the suicidal lady. This is the opening situation. When it is followed by a scream in the night, and the death of an old aunt hated by both girls alike, the excitement becomes intense. The author has taken pains to enlist our sympathies for her characters, and it is with a feeling of real relief and admiration that we find ourselves at the end of the tale. There are four stories in the book, and the best of them, a very neat tale of a dead man's vengeance, is worthy of Poe in everything but the quality of literary style. The author has Poe's invention and workmanship, without being hampered by his larger artistic aims, so that, though her tales will not so well bear re-reading, they make an impression as vivid, if more crude than his, when read for the first time. This American writer, who made her mark with "The Leavenworth Case"—a piece of detective fiction on the level of Gaboriau—builds better puzzles, and controls her surprises more skilfully than any living sensation writer we can call to mind.

*The Snare of Strength.* By RANDOLPH BEDFORD. (Heinemann, 6s.)

MR. BEDFORD throws upon the screen various pictures of young men in a young country. He shows them brimming over with vitality, greedy of life, enjoying it, devouring it recklessly as they race for wealth and fame and happiness: and then, as now one, now another, drops out, he clangs the bell over him. It is an old theme, and needs no comment. But because there are signs of power in Mr. Bedford's book, we would beg him not to squander his language as Ned the Prodigal squandered his life—or, if he must squander, to see at least that his squanderings be made in current, not counterfeit English. There is much to the credit side of Mr. Bedford's literary account. To say nothing of some rather clever and not ill-deserved satire on Australian politics, there are scenes and descriptions here which will appeal, through their vigorous fidelity, to all who know anything of the Bush. We can forgive many lapses after such good work as the sketch of Red Mick and his bullocks, or the opening study of men revelling in sea and sunlight, or the account of Ned Hoskins's death by the lotus lake. But Mr. Bedford too often mistakes crudity for strength, and his vocabulary (apart from legitimate slang) is sometimes fearful and wonderful. "Blood and gold" cannot fairly be described as "the colours of the life of man"; "horizontal hundreds" is hardly a happy description of a sleeping township; and we have never heard of "gestic," "millionous," "mirificent," "laughshot" or "amatorian." What, again, can one make of "a woman mysterious as tangible, and frangible as mysterious," especially when she lets fall "a splendid blue and lucent tear, as big as a bullock's last tear in the shambles"? But Mr. Bedford's women are not his strong point. His love interest leaves much to be desired, and after a careful study of George Gifford's various colloquies we feel convinced that the lady who thought "his voice a lute, his words a serenade," was suffering from a serious "amatorian" illusion.

*Love in the Lists.* By K. L. MONTGOMERY. (Fisher Unwin, 6s.)

COMEDY, that alluring thing, may lead to laughter or to tears: "Love in the Lists" leads to hysteria. To the possessor of true comic insight what richer field for the discovery of character than a Swiss pension during the season? Alas, that Miss Montgomery lacks the rich, humorous vision which alone could have vitalised her "pension comedy." Her characters are lay figures; her story opens with a fine situation of comedy and then degenerates into a medley of farce and melodrama; her dialogue is either so determinedly clever as to be strained to unintelligibility or is conventionally fantastic. We refuse to smile at the stupid jokes of those disagreeable, scandal-mongering pensionnaires or at the topsyturvy speech of the English lady who talks like one of Lever's Irishmen. The women are differentiated by label,



but their resolute man-hunting unites them in a nightmare realisation of the argument of "Man and Superman." The story describes the reconciliation of Neillina Hislop, a minxish young person with an inveterate habit of quoting Dickens, and Jasper Stringer, the rudest flower of Oxford culture that ever quoted Browning. Have we not travelled beyond the days when lovers parted over a Browning quotation? "Love in the Lists" is written in a would-be precious style with a determined opposition to the use of the definite article. The highly-wrought; "cleverness" of the dialogue and the author's reflections make tiresome reading. Those qualities of warmth and colour which were the virtues of "The Cardinal's Pawn" are absent from "Love in the Lists," because their author has essayed a venture foreign from her mood and style. Miss Montgomery should turn her eyes once more towards the past.

## FINE ART

### SOCIETIES AS SHOPMEN

NOT counting provincial and suburban institutions, upwards of thirty art societies and art clubs are now in existence having their headquarters in London and holding exhibitions there at least once a year. To the superficial observer the very number of these societies may seem to indicate that the arts in this country are in a prosperous condition. It is, however, only by investigating the aims and objects of these societies that we shall be able to arrive at any idea of their true worth, and to see whether their formation serves to benefit art or merely individual artists.

The Ridley Art Club, with refreshing candour, makes no secret that its "chief aim" is "An Annual Exhibition in the Spring in the Grafton Galleries, London;" and, though kindred and more pretentious societies either preserve a discreet silence as to their object or talk vaguely of encouraging art by means of mutual intercourse among the members, it may unhesitatingly be asserted that in the case of at least eighty per cent. of the total number, the annual or half-yearly exhibition is not only the "chief" but practically the sole aim of these societies. There remains to be discovered the aim of the exhibition. What is the bond that binds the members together? What principles are they desirous of demonstrating? What is their "platform"? The most careful inspection of the works exhibited will rarely answer any of these questions. We shall look in vain for any homogeneity of purpose, for any united didactic effort; we shall merely learn that an assorted collection of oil paintings or water-colours, good, bad and indifferent, is for sale, while the catalogue informs us that "purchasers are respectfully requested to pay a deposit of twenty-five per cent. on the amount of purchase." Surely no further investigation is necessary to prove that the vast majority of these so-called art societies, art clubs, and art institutes are mere aggregations of painters for commercial purposes, that their exhibitions are but organised bazaars, a co-operative effort to supply a demand which the members will at all events endeavour to create among their friends and acquaintances.

That a painter should be desirous to sell his works is perfectly right and natural, and no objection could be taken to associations of painters for trading purposes, did they not so loudly, and even blatantly, claim to be a great deal better than they are. It is the pretentiousness of these societies which is apt to render them obnoxious to all who think seriously about art. Instead of admitting the real purpose of their existence, which is fundamentally useful and quite legitimate, they endeavour to pose as idealistic bodies, the membership of which is to be regarded as a distinction instead of merely a convenience. And so gullible is the public in the matter of self-conferred courtesy titles and bogus degrees, that it is prepared unthinkingly to bow down to any painter with an array of

initials after his name, without pausing to reflect whether these have any real significance or value. The well-known tradesman of Westbourne Grove would not deceive anybody if he chose to style himself Mr. William Whiteley, U.P., but many well-meaning patrons of minor exhibitions would doubtless think far more of a collection of water-colours by Mr. John Jones, P.S.A. (Member of the Picture Supply Association), than of the equally admirable drawings of plain John Jones. In these circumstances it is scarcely surprising that astute artists should avail themselves more and more of the initials of the third-rate and fourth-rate societies to which they belong, so that amid a maze of appended capitals the public has quite lost sight of the relative importance of the various series, and a real distinction such as the R.S.A. of a Scottish Academician has in the Southern public's mind no greater weight than the R.B.A. and R.I. of two equally royal but by no means equally distinguished societies.

It is scarcely necessary to point out that these remarks do not apply to the few societies which, in addition to organising exhibitions, have other well-defined aims. The names of these will occur to every reader, but their number is very limited and does not appear to be on the increase. One could extend a welcome to the Society of Twelve which endeavoured to excite public interest in the neglected arts of original wood and metal engraving, but it is difficult to see what benefit the community may hope to derive from the formation of such a body as the Society of Twenty-Five English Painters, now holding its inaugural exhibition in the Dowdeswell Galleries. Here is a collection of cabinet pictures in oils by various painters—many of great merit, be it said—exhibited solely for the sake of exhibiting. The society has no other *raison d'être* than to paint pictures of a suitable size for the adornment of villa residences and to expose their work for sale in London, the provinces, and on the Continent. Considering how little other institutions have to offer, it may seem ungrateful to cavil at the existence of a body which makes us better acquainted with the sterling work of Messrs. D. Y. Cameron, Oliver Hall, E. A. Hornel, Bertram Priestman, and Grosvenor Thomas—to name a few of the "Twenty-Five." But as a matter of fact most of the members already belong to other societies and all of them have contributed to other exhibitions given in London. Consequently it cannot be said that the new body has brought to light talent which might otherwise have remained invisible to the public. As a collection of paintings by British contemporary artists, the exhibition is worthy of notice and even of commendation; as the *début* of a new society it is nothing more than a co-operative effort for purely commercial purposes.

In conclusion, one may remark that the multiplicity of these little societies with their continual exposures of their works for sale militates against the general recognition of the best talent to be found in their midst. The public cannot and will not go to every little art exhibition, and therefore chance, for the most part, decides whether it makes itself acquainted with the best or the worst painting that is being accomplished outside the Royal Academy. That no serious rival to that much abused institution has yet arisen is due to the prevailing tendency among the "outsiders" to separate instead of to unite. Each little clique, bent on pushing and selling its own wares, not infrequently shows itself to be more exclusive than the official institution it derides. Such societies are purely self-seeking in aim, and their notion of "encouraging art" is to discourage the sale of other artists' work. Were they animated by any real desire to show the public the best that is being done in painting to-day, the "outsiders," sinking all personal jealousies and differences of opinion, would unite to combat the multiplicity of petty societies which dissipates their strength, and amalgamate themselves into one large, powerful body in whose great exhibition the weakest might, figuratively if not literally, go to the wall, whereupon the strength of the strongest would stand forth the more clearly revealed.



## MUSIC

## IRISH FOLK-TUNE

GEORGE PETRIE was an enthusiastic musician as well as a painter and an antiquary; and through many years he perseveringly collected folk-tunes from all parts of Ireland. Under the auspices of a society, he began publishing his *trouvailles*, and the first volume appeared in 1855; but only a fragment of a second saw the light. Petrie's manuscript has been piously preserved; and expatriated Irishmen have now succeeded where the stay-at-homes failed, and have safely perpetuated the whole in print. "The Complete Petrie Collection of Ancient Irish Music" (published for the Irish Literary Society of London by Boosey and Co., London and New York) makes an exceptionally valuable addition to the world's treasures of national melody. Altogether one thousand five hundred and eighty-four separate tunes are included. We have little but praise to bestow upon the style in which the collection has been issued, as regards either plan or details. The editor is Sir C. Villiers Stanford; a "West Briton" or Anglicised Irishman who holds one of the highest places among native musicians. Petrie's original preface is reprinted in full. In one marked respect the new edition is a distinct improvement on the old; the tunes are given from the manuscript without any accompaniments. Petrie had himself arranged some for the pianoforte; the rest were entrusted to his daughter. The accompaniments she wrote were tasteless and affected by contemporary drawing-room music, unsuited to natural and fresh melody. Sir C. V. Stanford's resolution to give the tunes without any addition was well founded; yet we can believe that the circulation of the volume will thereby suffer to a certain extent. It will be a repository which the real student of folk-melody will place on a very convenient shelf, and which the patriotic Irishman or Irishwoman will cherish as a Scot cherishes his Burns. But the absence of accompaniments debar a vast number of the general public from making its acquaintance; music without harmony is nowadays almost unthinkable, while those who can "vamp" simple accompaniments neatly are not found in ordinary households. We shall therefore not look forward to widespread diffusion of the volume, at least on this side St. George's Channel. Petrie noted down two thousand one hundred and forty-eight pieces, of which more than five hundred are duplicates or nearly so; his manuscript consists of eight hundred and sixty-two pages, and eighteen pages more are apparently lost. The pieces are classified into tunes without titles (about three hundred), tunes with English titles, tunes with Irish titles, and several special classes such as laments, lullabies, dances and marches. Petrie has in some cases mentioned the place where he obtained the tune: more frequently the county or province only. Munster and Connaught were the happiest hunting-grounds, justifying the belief that the Celtic Hibernians are more musical than the Teutonic races of the east and north. And yet the only Irishman who has exercised a permanent influence on modern music, who achieved a European reputation as a performer and composer, was born at Dublin, and bore the very un-Celtic name of John Field. The average Irishman seems to acquire the art of music, like other arts, very quickly up to a certain point; there he stops short, and not one great *prima donna* nor *primo tenore*, nor one great violinist, has arisen among Ireland's millions, all musical. Can the defect be remedied by the study of the traditional melodies Petrie has preserved? A similar plan is often enough recommended in England; but among Teutonic or Latin nations the scientific side of music always asserts its sway. Wild unrestrained passion finds its musical utterance only among the nations of Eastern Europe, Slavonic or Magyar; Berlioz the Frenchman has to seek help among matters outside the province of music. The Celtic nations have hitherto held aloof from the highest branches of music, oratorio and symphony; even opera, more suited

to their idiosyncrasy, has no permanent home among them. Has Wagner's *Tristan*, for instance, ever been heard in Ireland at all? Or in Wales? Yet this may change, through the agency of the folk-tunes. Who, a century ago, ever thought of a Polish composer or a Hungarian composer? Chopin appeared, and the world found at once that Poland was "a musical country." Liszt appeared; and the Magyars were pronounced "a musical nation." The wild melodies of Poland became civilised under Chopin's harmonic treatment; Liszt's terrific brilliancies transfigured the barbaric glitter of Hungarian marches. An Irish genius, should one arise, will, of course, pursue his own path; but the melodies of his native country suggest that Chopin will be his model rather than Liszt. The Irish boy or girl who shows especial talent for music can hardly receive a present more useful than this publication of the Petrie collection.

## CORRESPONDENCE

## MACAULAY'S NEW ZEALANDER

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY

SIR,—A few weeks ago, in the columns of the ACADEMY, appeared a notice pointing out that Macaulay was evidently indebted to Mrs. Barbauld for his famous reference to the New Zealander surveying the broken arches of London Bridge. I cannot recollect the precise words in which the idea is expressed, but I should be very pleased if some reader would kindly tell me whether or not I am correct in surmising that Macaulay plagiarised from Shelley, and that the latter copied, in his turn, from Henry Kirke White. Appended are the parallel passages:

"Even as the savage sits upon the stone  
That marks where stood her capitol, and hears  
The bittern booming in the weeds."—*White*.

"When London shall be an habitation of bitterns; when St. Paul's and Westminster Abbey shall stand shapeless and nameless ruins, in the midst of an unpeopled marsh; when the piers of Waterloo Bridge shall become the nuclei of islets of reeds and osiers, and cast the jagged shadows of their broken arches on the solitary stream; some transatlantic commentator will be weighing, in the scales of some new and now unimagined system of criticism, the respective merits of the two poems under consideration."—*Shelley*.

A. C. B.

[After reading the note referred to by our correspondent (ACADEMY, October 14, 1905, p. 1068), a contemporary referred to a "curious traveller from Lima" imagined by Horace Walpole (in a letter of 1774) to "visit England and give a description of the ruins of St. Paul's." Macaulay is more likely to have taken his idea from Walpole than from either Shelley or Mrs. Barbauld.—Ed.]

## MR. GLADSTONE

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY

SIR,—May I be permitted to remark on some statements that appear in the current number of the ACADEMY concerning Mr. Gladstone?

I heartily concur in your reviewer's condemnation of Mr. McCarthy's generalities; but may I add that one remark he quotes is, apart from precision of statement, quite incorrect? Mr. Gladstone was "a man who understood and appreciated the discoveries and influences of modern science." So Mr. McCarthy. "From any full or serious examination of the scientific movement," says Mr. Morley, "he stood aside" ("Life of Gladstone," vol. i. p. 209). The two statements seem irreconcilable.

The "stern civility" and lack of gaiety which another reviewer lays at Mr. Gladstone's door seem a little inconsistent with the "happy raillery of his talk," on which Mr. Morley frequently insists ("Life," Introduction). This is not the place to discuss contemporary politics; but to say that there is a Conservative tradition, more active or more virile than that of the Liberals, is bold.

October 28.

DAVID DAVIES.

## READINGS IN THE POETS

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY

SIR,—The excellent suggestion of Mr. Max Plowman, in his letter published in the ACADEMY of October 28, should be carried out at once.

I happen to know one whose reading of passages from Browning's Poems would be more illuminative and educative than any lecture on him I have ever read, or listened to. I suggest Browning to begin with, but a dozen of the Victorian Poets might be similarly dealt with, if the first experiment succeeds.

If the Kensington, or Chelsea, Town Hall could be secured—or better still some hall near Piccadilly Circus, or Westminster—for an

afternoon recital early in November, and only a small admission fee of a shilling be charged, I think I can promise that it will be filled.

As Mr. Plowman truly says, it is not mere "Lectures on the Poets" that we need; but competent readers of them, who are thus the skilled interpreters of their work.

SPEE.

#### NEW YORK AND EDGAR ALLAN POE

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY

SIR,—The fact that the electors for the so-called *Hall of Fame* in New York City decline to admit Poe, suggests to me the following:

EXCLUDED.

Into the Charnel Hall of Fame  
The dead alone should go;  
Then write not there the living name  
Of Edgar Allan Poe.

JOHN B. TABB,  
Ellicott City, Maryland.

October 14.

### BOOKS RECEIVED

#### BIOGRAPHY AND MEMOIRS.

- Brookfield, Charles and Frances. *Mrs. Brookfield and her Circle*. 2 vols. Pitman, 28s. net. (See p. 1143.)  
*The Story of a Devonshire House*. By Lord Coleridge. Unwin, 15s. net. [A history of the Coleridge family. With letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge.]  
 Spielmann, M. H.; and Layard, G. S. *Kate Greenaway*. Black, 20s. net. *Memoirs of Sir Wemyss Reid*. Cassell, 18s. net. (See p. 1145.)  
*Charlotte Brontë and Her Sisters*. By C. K. Shorter. Hodder & Stoughton, 3s. 6d. (See p. 1149.)  
 Cuthell, Edith E. *Wilhelmina Margravine of Baireuth*. 2 vols. Chapman & Hall, 21s. net.  
 [The life of Frederica Sophia Wilhelmina, Princess Royal of Prussia and Margravine of Baireuth. Contains correspondence with her brother, Frederic the Great, and with Voltaire.]  
 St. John, Sir Frederick. *Reminiscences of a Retired Diplomat*. Chapman & Hall, 15s. net.  
 [Sir Frederick St. John's experiences in Florence, Stuttgart, Peking, Mongolia, Constantinople, Vienna, Buenos Ayres, Rio Janeiro, Central America, Bogota, Caracas, Serbia and Berne.]

#### DRAMA.

- Mantzius, Karl. *A History of Theatrical Art in Ancient and Modern Times*. Authorised Translation by Louise von Cossel. Vol. iv. *Molière and his Times: The Theatre in France in the Seventeenth Century*. Duckworth, 10s. net.

#### FICTION.

- Castle, Agnes and Egerton. *French Nan*. Smith, Elder, 6s. (See p. 1154.)  
 Zangwill, Edith Ayrton. *The First Mrs. Mollivar*. Smith, Elder, 6s.  
 Cambridge, Ada. *A Platonic Friendship*. Hurst & Blackett, 6s.  
 Holland, Elizabeth. *The Nunery Wall*. Nash, 6s.  
 Barr, Robert. *The Speculations of John Steele*. Chatto & Windus, 6s.  
 Taubmann, Goldie V. *Nigel Thomson*. Heinemann, 6s.  
 Ashton, Algernon. *Truth, Wit, and Wisdom*. Chapman & Hall, 6s.  
 "Chilosa. *How's that, Umpire?* White, 6s.  
 Forbes, Ethel M. *A Heart's Harmony*. Melrose, 6s.  
 Crockett, S. R. *The Cherry Ribband*. Hodder & Stoughton, 6s.  
 Mitford, Bertram. *A Secret of the Lebombo*. Hurst & Blackett, 6s.

#### HISTORY.

- Mathieson, William Law. *Scotland and the Union*. MacLehose, 10s. 6d. net.  
 [A history of Scotland from 1695 to 1747—from the Revolution Settlement to the enactments brought about by the last Jacobite revolt.]  
 Rose, J. Holland. *The Development of the European Nations*. Constable, 18s. net.  
 [Dr. J. Holland Rose deals only with events which have had a distinctly formative influence on the development of European States from 1870 to 1900, and has, for the most part, refrained from expressing an opinion on questions of motive and policy.]  
 Innes, Arthur D. *England under the Tudors*. Methuen, 10s. 6d. net.  
 [The fourth of six volumes, edited by Prof. Oman, which trace the history of England to 1815. Several good maps are inserted at the end of each.]  
 Mahan, A. T. *Sea Power in its Relations to the War of 1812*. 2 vols. Sampson Low, 36s. net.  
 [With the present work Captain Mahan concludes the series of "The Influence of Sea Power upon History."] Adams, George Burton. *The History of England from the Norman Conquest to the Death of John (1066-1216)*. Longmans, 7s. 6d. net.  
 [The second volume of the "Political History" series, vol. x. of which was reviewed in these columns on October 21.] Eltzbacher, O. *Modern Germany*. Smith, Elder, 7s. 6d. net.  
 [A review of the political and economic problems, policy, and ambitions of modern Germany, and of the causes of her success.] Grey, Edward C. W. *St. Giles's of the Lepers*. Longmans, 3s. 6d. net.  
 [A history of the parish of St. Giles's.] Smith, W. Richmond. *The Siege and Fall of Port Arthur*. Nash, 12s. 6d. net.  
 Suyematsu, Baron. *The Risen Sun*. Second impression. Constable, 12s. 6d. net.

#### MISCELLANEOUS.

- Wright, Joseph. *The English Dialect Grammar*. Frowde, 16s. net. (See review, p. 1147.)

Santayana, George. *Reason in Religion; Reason in Art*. Constable, 5s. net each.

[Two further volumes in the "Life of Reason, or the Phases of Human Progress," the first vol. of which was reviewed in these columns on June 3.] Ashcroft, Edgar A. *The World's Desires, or the Results of Monism*. Kegan Paul, 10s. 6d. net.

[An elementary treatise on a realistic religion and philosophy of human life.]

The Complete Works of Tolstoy: Vols. xxiii. and xxiv. Translated and edited by Leo Wiener. Dent, 3s. 6d. net each.

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#### TOPOGRAPHY AND TRAVEL.

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Passmore, T. H. *In Further Ardennes*. Dent, 7s. 6d. net.

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[Sketches in Spain and Northern Africa. Illustrated by Augustine FitzGerald.]

### THE BOOKSHELF

Messrs. Kegan Paul and Co. have just issued a seventeenth edition of Augustus Hare's *Walks in Rome* (10s. 6d. net), with plans, etc., by St. Clair Baddeley. We notice a longer list of *errata* than there should be, but the editor has brought the text up to date and made several good additions, and the maps, illustrations, and so forth are all excellent. The book is light in the hand and clearly printed, so that in its present form it can easily be taken in the hand by the visitor to Rome, and read upon the spot.

*Wild Wings*. By Herbert Keightley Job. Illustrated from photographs by the author. (Constable, 10s. 6d. net.)—This American book describes and illustrates the experiences of the author in obtaining photographs in their breeding-haunts of many of the larger and rarer species of North American birds, from the islets of the Canadian maritime provinces to the remotest swamps and "Keys" of Florida. It is remarkable as a product of that "hunting with the camera" which, in the case of many sportsmen-naturalists, has proved "more interesting and exciting" to use the author's own words, than the use of the gun. The photographs which form Mr. Job's sporting trophies display such a remarkable variety of scenes of wild bird life, and have captured so much of the freedom and wildness of the remotest solitudes of the North American coasts and forests, that they stand out in a place well above almost all the numerous books of this class which have been published during the last few years. The grace and beauty of many of these studies of birds in flight and at rest is indeed remarkable. It is satisfactory to learn that most of the States of the Union have now passed protective legislation for the species which were threatened with destruction, and that in most cases it is effectually enforced, though the enormous premium still offered for the so-called "ospreys" of the millinery trade makes it almost impossible to protect properly the two species of heron which bear those plumes at the breeding-season. According to Mr. Job, species nesting on some of the Candian bird-rocks are much in need of similar legislation, though the Province of New Brunswick has set an excellent example in this respect. The letterpress is breezy and descriptive, and harmonises well with the illustrations. In an introductory letter, President Roosevelt commends the "substitution of the camera for the gun," though in a postscript he confesses to still kneeling in the temple of Baal, as "something of a hunter, though a lover of wild nature first!"

### To Authors

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